CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1109
28 August 1991

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LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA ON 28 AUGUST 1991

I write to draw your attention to Document CD/1091 which was circulated on July 24, 1991.

2. In our view, the Document CD/1091 has transgressed into issues irrelevant to the Conference on Disarmament including certain baseless allegations against India regarding developments in the Indian State of Jammu & Kashmir. It is regrettable that the forum of the Conference on Disarmament has been absued for such an extraneous campaign which has no relevance to the mandate of the Conference on Disarmament.

3. My delegation would not wish to enter into polemics on these extraneous issues in the Conference on Disarmament since India's position on the question of the Indian State of Jammu & Kashmir has been stated time and again in relevant forums.

4. In regard to the references in that document to the old proposal about a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, India's views were conveyed by the official spokesman of the Government of India on June 7, 1991. I reproduce below the text of the statement:

> "Our attention has been drawn to reports on the suggestions made by Mr. Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, on the question of nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia. We find nothing new in these suggestions. They are a rehash of the well-known Pakistani posture adopted by them for the past several years.

The Pakistan Prime Minister has specifically suggested that USA, the Soviet Union and China should consult and meet with India and Pakistan to arrive at an agreement for keeping the South Asian region free of nuclear weapons. Pakistan has been moving a resolution on Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone in South Asia for the past several years while at the same time relentlessly pursuing its clandestine nuclear weapons programme. Now that there is overwhelming evidence regarding the true nature of Pakistan's nuclear programme, merely repeating the proposal at this stage must be viewed as a propaganda exercise and a tactic by Pakistan for diverting international pressure to give up its nuclear weapons programme.

India's views on the creation of regional Nuclear Weapons-Free Zones are well-known. Given the global reach of nuclear weapons, it is illusory to seek security through regional arrangements, particularly where the security interests of all the concerned states are not taken into account in defining the region. That is why India has propsed an Action Plan for the ushering in of a Nuclear Weapon-Free World. India has always been and is prepared to enter into consultations with Pakistan or any other country to work for the implementation of our phased programme for the elimination of nuclear weapons in a time-bound framework, which includes commitments to be given by nuclear capable countries, not to cross the threshold".

5. I should be grateful if this letter could be circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed) Prakash Shah